

## CLAIMS

What is claimed and desired to be secured by patent is:

1. A method for data backup, comprising the steps of:

identifying at least one data increment which was previously provided to a subscriber  
server or generated by a subscriber server and which is to be backed up;

checking at least one service provider access server to determine if it has a copy of at  
least a portion of the identified data increment or can regenerate or replicate at least a portion of  
the identified data increment; and

backing up the data increment using the copy or regenerated or replicated portion from  
the access server if it is found and otherwise using a copy sent from the subscriber server after  
the checking step.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of identifying at least one data increment  
includes:

evaluating one of a date stamp, time stamp, sequence number, source address, URL and  
checksum of the data increment at the subscriber server; and

sending an identifier for each identified data increment to a service provider data backup  
server.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the step of checking at least one service provider access  
server is conducted by the service provider data backup server.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein if the at least one service provider access server has the copy or regenerated or replicated portion of the identified data increment, a checksum is computed to determine if the subscriber server copy contains the same data as the copy or regenerated or replicated portion.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein if a copy is sent from the subscriber server after the checking step, back up is delayed for a time period.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of backing up includes backing up the data increment to a service provider data backup server.

7. A system comprising an access server at an ISP, a data backup server at the ISP, and a connection to a subscriber server for Internet access and for data backup.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the access server includes at least one of a Web server, an e-mail server and an FTP server.

9. A system comprising:

means for providing access to a wide area network at an ISP;

means for backing up data at the ISP; and

means for connecting to a subscriber server to the ISP for wide area network access and for data backup.

10. A signal embodied in a computer, the signal comprising at least one data increment identifier identifying data to backup to nonvolatile storage, and a corresponding indication of whether a copy of that data increment was found on a provider access server.

11. A configured storage medium embodying data and instructions readable by a computer to perform the method of claim 1.

12. A system comprising:

means for identifying at least one data increment which was previously provided to a subscriber server or generated by a subscriber server and which is to be backed up;

means for checking at least one service provider access server to determine if it has a copy of at least a portion of the identified data increment or can regenerate or replicate at least a portion of the identified data increment; and

means for backing up the data increment using the copy or regenerated or replicated portion from the access server if it is found and otherwise using a copy sent from the subscriber server after the checking step.